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The Pearl-Strings; A History of the Resiliyy Dynasty of Yemen.

By 'ALIYYU 'BNU 'L-HASAN 'EL-KHAZREJIYY; with Translation, Introduction, Annotations, Index, Tables, and Maps. By the late Sir J. W. REDHOUSE, Litt.D. Edited by E. G. BROWNE, R. A. NICHOLSON, and A. ROGERS, and printed for the Trustees of the "E. J. W. Gibb Memorial." Volume I., containing the First Part of the Translation. (Leyden: E. J. Brill; London: Luzac and Company. 1906. Pp. xxvii, 320.)

AMONG the various bequests made and funds established during the last few years for the encouragement of different branches of learning the historical student may well feel a special interest in the "E. J. W. Gibb Memorial", for the scope of this fund includes not only studies in Oriental philology, but also researches touching any questions pertaining to the Mohammedan Orient.

This Memorial "was founded", as one of the circulars of its publications states, "by the late Mrs. Gibb, of Glasgow, to perpetuate the memory of her son the late Elias John Wilkinson Gibb, who died in his forty-fifth year on December 5, 1901, and to promote those researches into the History, Literature, Philosophy and Religion of the Turks, Persians and Arabs to which his life was devoted". "The income of the Trust Fund may, at the discretion of the Trustees, be used for purposes connected with the furtherance of the studies enumerated above other than the publication of texts, translations and memoirs, such as the purchase of books and manuscripts, the granting of travelling scholarships, and the endowment of lecturers; but hitherto it has been chiefly applied to publication."

It is with great satisfaction that the reviewer notes the evident purpose of the trustees of this fund to publish translations of various important Oriental works. The great value of good translations from Oriental languages and the fact that there are so few of such translations have often been referred to by others, but are not likely to be mentioned too often. In spite of the great and manifest importance of, for example, the Arabic language, for the study of medieval history, the experience of years has made the reviewer feel very skeptical that any considerable number of historical students will spend enough time studying Arabic to enable them to use Arabic sources in the original. Whatever idea they get of these sources will almost inevitably be derived wholly, or for the most part, from translations. It was therefore a happy thought on the part of the trustees to introduce early into the series (it is vol. III., part 1) the first part of Al-Khazrají's important work translated by such a well-known scholar as the late Sir James W. Redhouse.

Al-Khazrají the author of this work, a unique manuscript of which belongs to the India Office, lived, as the translator informs us in his preface, at the court of the seventh monarch of the line whose history

he recounts, and died in the year 1409. The leading members of the family whose history he describes, having attained to a position of importance in Egypt, were sent by Saladin in 1173 to Yemen in the suite of Melik Mu'adhdham (commonly spelled Mu'azzam) his brother. It is with the arrival of this leader in Al-Yemen that the real history begins, although the author has given more or less legendary material purporting to be a sketch of the history of the family from the very earliest times (pp. 45-74).

Arrived in Yemen, members of the family were assigned to various positions of importance, their influence grew, and when in 1227 or 1228 Melik Mes'ûd died (p. 90), Núru'd-Dîn 'Umer son of 'Aliyy son of Resûl, whom he had made his lieutenant in the whole of Yemen, determined to become an independent sovereign, though at first "he outwardly showed himself the lieutenant of Melik Mes'ûd, making no alteration in the coinage or in the public prayer for the sovereign" (p. 94). So successful was he in his plans that by 630 A. H. (A. D. 1232-1233) we find him coining money in his own name and ordering preachers to offer public prayer for him (p. 97). It is the history of the first seven monarchs of the dynasty thus founded by him that we have in this work, for, as the translator tells us in his preface, the history ends with the death of Sultan Melik 'Eshref II., A. D. 1400, "though the dynasty was not dispossessed for another sixty years". The present volume brings the story down to the death of the Sultan Melik Mu'eyyed in A. H. 721 (end of A. D. 1321).

Beside a full table of contents the volume has a preface by Professor Browne which contains among other things some interesting information about the translator, Sir James W. Redhouse, including a letter from him to Mr. Gibb. There is a short preface by the translator himself telling how he came to transcribe and translate the work. In the introduction (pp. 5-41), by the same hand, is given an outline of the history of Yemen from the earliest times down to 1858. The student will find this of much value in helping him to secure the proper perspective in considering the present work.

It is of course impossible to pass final judgment on the work till the rest of the translation, together with the text and the annotations, appear (it is planned to devote four more volumes to the complete work), but an examination of the volume will at once show the large amount of valuable material it contains for the political, religious, and social history of the period, and will make the student grateful to Professor Browne and his fellow-editors and to the trustees of the E. J. W. Gibb Memorial for making accessible to scholars this translation prepared with so much care by that great Orientalist, the late Sir James W. Redhouse.

J. R. JEWETT.